

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

July 26, 2017

The Honorable Betsy DeVos
Secretary of Education
United States Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202

The Honorable Candice Jackson
Acting Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
Office for Civil Rights
United States Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary DeVos and Acting Assistant Secretary Jackson:

More than three years ago, after hearing from survivors and advocates, a bipartisan group of Members of Congress, including many of the undersigned, wrote to the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights (OCR) to request more transparency related to Title IX investigations and enforcement actions against colleges and universities regarding sexual violence and harassment. In May 2014, OCR responded by releasing its first public list of colleges and universities under investigation for possible violations of federal law over the handling of sexual violence and harassment complaints.¹ The list has grown from 55 to 240 colleges and universities and has become a weekly reminder of OCR's commitment to better serve survivors and to hold schools accountable.

As members of the Bipartisan Task Force to End Sexual Violence, we urge OCR to provide transparency about the Title IX investigation process by continuing to make this list available to the public. It is critical for both providing full information to students, parents, and communities, as well as for ensuring accountability when sexual violence occurs.

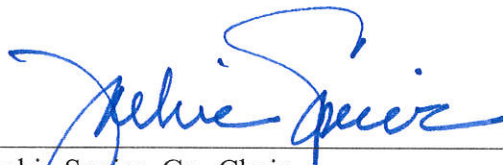
Students and parents use the list to find the information they need to make informed decisions about the safety of the colleges and universities they plan to attend. The list has also helped campus communities understand and address the scope of the problem at their own schools. Additionally, the list is critical for organizing an effective response to campus sexual violence. For example, before there was a public list, students often spent time and money filing duplicative and unnecessary Title IX complaints to OCR. Additionally, campus communities, and survivors who had filed complaints, often remained unaware that their school was under one, if not multiple investigations. This lack of transparency wasted the resources of both survivors and of the government, and prevented survivors from organizing to address institutional problems.

¹ <https://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/us-department-education-releases-list-higher-education-institutions-open-title-i>

Ending sexual violence on our college campuses will never become a reality if college and university communities are kept in the dark. By continuing to publish the list of colleges and universities under investigation for potential violations of Title IX, OCR will show its commitment to survivors and its intent to hold schools accountable for their actions. This is not about shaming colleges and universities. The OCR has an obligation to serve and protect students, which includes ensuring that survivors of sexual violence and harassment have access to educational opportunities free from discrimination, as is their right under Title IX.

We urge you to affirm your commitment to survivors of sexual violence and harassment by continuing to publish the list of colleges and universities under investigation for Title IX violations. The Task Force is committed to working with you to end sexual violence at K-12 schools and colleges and universities. We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,




Jackie Speier, Co- Chair
Task Force to End Sexual Violence



Patrick Meehan, Co-Chair
Task Force to End Sexual Violence



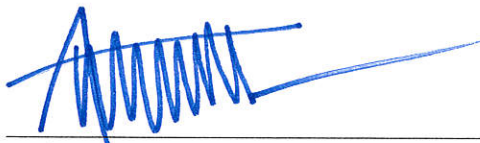
Ann McLane Kuster, Co-Chair
Task Force to End Sexual Violence



David P. Joyce, Co-Chair
Task Force to End Sexual Violence



Lois Frankel



Ted Poe



Niki Tsongas



Lynn Jenkins

Debbie Dingell

Debbie Dingell

Don Bacon

Don Bacon

Carolyn B. Maloney

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Ryan Costello

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Sean Patrick Maloney

Sean Patrick Maloney

Daniel M. Donovan, Jr.

Daniel M. Donovan, Jr.

Pramila Jayapal

Pramila Jayapal

Rodney Davis

Rodney Davis

Jim Costa

Jim Costa

Katherine M. Clark

Katherine Clark

Gwen S. Moore

Gwen S. Moore

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